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In Defense of Justice for Álvaro Uribe

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About This Site

FREE URIBE is a website dedicated to being a central informational resource on the arbitrary arrest of former President Álvaro Uribe of Colombia, and about the facts of the judicial actions against him. The content of this site is distributed by DCI Group on behalf of Álvaro Uribe Vélez. Additional information is on file with the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C.

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[@IvanCepedaCast](#) and his well-funded international allies have waged a media war of slander for more than a decade. [FreeUribe.com](#) will set the record straight. [#FreeUribe](#) [#UribeLibre](#)



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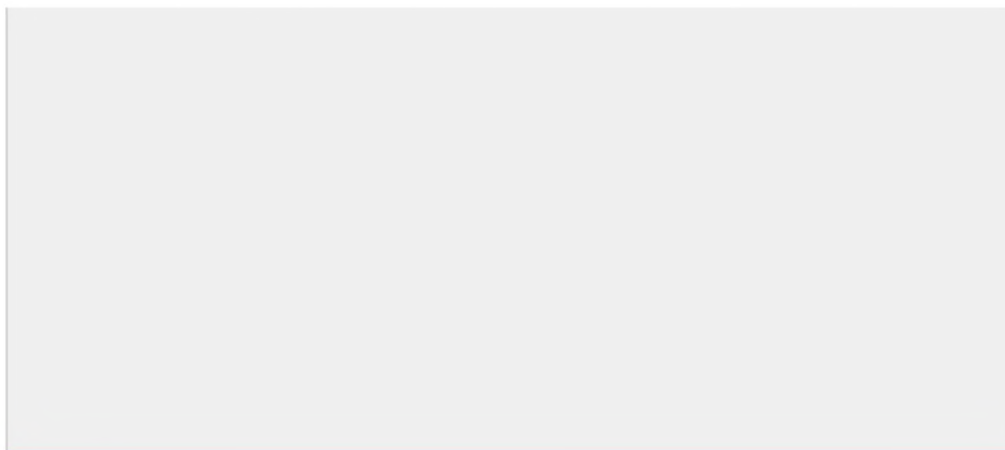


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FACTS about Álvaro Uribe

Former President Álvaro Uribe was ordered arrested by the Supreme Court of Justice of Colombia on August 4, 2020, an action widely seen as a violation of his legal and constitutional rights. The details of the case show his arrest was arbitrary and an affront to international standards of justice and fairness.

The truth is that this case is entirely political, driven by political allies of the terrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), whom Uribe drove into near extinction when he was president. The FARC couldn't kill him, overthrow him, or silence him – so they now seek to jail him.

In 2000, [President Andrés Pastrana and U.S. President Bill Clinton launched "Plan Colombia"](#) – a 15-year, \$10 billion security aid program designed to break the stranglehold of drug cartels and the FARC on the Colombian people. It enjoyed broad, bipartisan support in Congress and was expanded by Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama. [Plan Colombia was a major foreign policy success for the United States](#), with President Uribe credited for crucial strategic victories that restored the country's security

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and economic revival while disarming tens of thousands of paramilitaries and FARC guerillas before he left office.

In 2008, [Uribe ordered the successful operation that rescued three Americans along with Ingrid Betancourt](#), his Green Party presidential opponent in 2002, and 11 other hostages who had been kidnapped by the FARC and held for years at a jungle prison camp [where they were tortured](#). In 2009, [President Bush awarded Uribe the Presidential Medal of Freedom](#), and recalled the phone call from Uribe, informing him that the American hostages were safe. "By refusing to allow the land he loves to be destroyed by an enemy within, by proving that terror can be opposed and defeated, President Uribe has reawakened the hopes of his countrymen and shown a model of leadership to a watching world," Bush [said](#) at the ceremony.

The FARC has vowed revenge against Uribe for decades, and when warfare didn't work, they turned to "lawfare". They joined with their most militant supporter in Colombian politics, Senator Ivan Cepeda of the far-left Alternative Democratic Pole, to wage a relentless political campaign to deprive Uribe of his freedom in order to silence him. Uribe's constitutional rights have been repeatedly violated in this case, with illegal measures by judges that no justice system in the free world would permit. Worse yet, Uribe's right to defend himself in freedom were taken away while avowed FARC terrorist leaders – including those who plotted to kill Uribe during his presidency – walk free.

The outrage over this case has become a matter of international concern among the defenders of democratic ideals. The Democratic Initiative of Spain and the Americas (IDEA) expressed its "[solidarity](#)" with Álvaro Uribe, and 21 former elected presidents and prime ministers of Spain and Latin America, including Nobel Peace Prize recipient Óscar Arias of Costa Rica, [called for Uribe to be freed](#).



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FACTS about the Case

The Colombian Supreme Court of Justice, on the heels of a massive corruption scandal, assembled a "case" in the last few years against Álvaro Uribe without evidence, driven by political accusations that have repeatedly been thrown out of court. It relies entirely on testimonies obtained in prisons by an opposition politician – Senator Ivan Cepeda — who spent a decade attempting to induce accusations from convicted criminals against Uribe and his family with offers of cash, leniency and foreign asylum.

The Supreme Court has been rocked by a [case-fixing and bribery scandal](#), and has been led by three chief justices in the last three years who have systematically suppressed evidence that incriminates Cepeda for his actions or supports Uribe's innocence. They have repeatedly issued orders against Uribe without constitutional jurisdiction and used illegal wiretaps that still didn't yield evidence against him. One of the three judges who had protected Cepeda, José Leonidas Bustos, [fled Colombia in 2019 to evade arrest](#) in the case-fixing scandal called the "[Toga Cartel](#)".

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- **The “Case” that Led to Uribe’s Arbitrary Arrest**

The August 4 Supreme Court order to arrest Álvaro Uribe was the final step of a miscarriage of justice that began, incredibly, with a complaint by Uribe himself. Since 2009, Ivan Cepeda had been campaigning in prisons to induce accusations against Uribe and his family in the name of the congressional Committee on Human Rights, without that committee’s authorization.

In 2012, Uribe filed a complaint with the Supreme Court of Justice over Cepeda’s abuse of public office and defamatory harassment, adding evidence in 2013 that Cepeda had used offers of foreign asylum and cash to obtain false testimony. Uribe’s complaint was assigned to Judge José Luis Barceló, who [in 2011 had joined](#) now-fugitive Judge José Leonidas Bustos in [suppressing evidence](#) of Cepeda’s direct links to the terrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Instead of investigating Cepeda’s years of illegal acts for political ends, Barceló suppressed *all* the evidence in Uribe’s complaint – which was substantial and included clear evidence of Cepeda [passing his own funds to his star witness](#) through an allied political organization.

On the eve of the 2018 congressional elections, Barceló closed the case against Cepeda without due evidentiary investigation and secretly opened one against Uribe himself, alleging that Uribe, not Cepeda, had bribed and tampered with witnesses, despite having no evidence. From the beginning, the case showed classic signs of bias. Barceló violated due process repeatedly and held onto the case when he did not sit on the Supreme Court panel with due jurisdiction. It was a legal and constitutional aberration from the start.

Then, Barceló illegally tapped Uribe’s phone in a manner that grossly violated international standards of justice. The judge issued a warrant in an unrelated case against a different individual, but Uribe’s number was “accidentally” listed as

belonging to that individual. Over 20,000 phone conversations on Uribe's phone were recorded under this falsified order, none of which included incriminating evidence. It was later proven the wiretap couldn't have been "accidental" since neither Uribe's number nor anything resembling it ever turned up in any part of that case file. Uribe only became aware of the existence of the case when the Supreme Court began leaking selective materials to the Colombian media. When Uribe publicly filed two successive petitions in 2018 to be duly informed of a case against him, the Court refused.

Uribe was finally called to testify in the case in late 2019, and he staunchly defended his innocence before a court that had systematically violated his rights. On the basis of testimony from prisoners induced by Cepeda, inferences – not incriminating evidence – from illegal wiretaps, and total suppression of evidence that both Cepeda and the Court had acted illegally, Álvaro Uribe was arrested on August 4, 2020.



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FACTS about the FARC

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) was founded in 1964 as the guerrilla army of the Communist Part of Colombia. For 50 years, the FARC waged a terrorist war against the democratically elected governments of Colombia, seeking to overthrow them and impose a Marxist dictatorship aligned with Cuba, and obtained the strong support of the *chavista* regime in Venezuela. With financing from drug trafficking and hostage ransoms, the FARC carried out terrorist attacks, kidnappings, assassinations and military-scale occupation of Colombian territory. As international drug cartels and paramilitary groups rose in parallel, Colombia began to slide towards being a failed state.

The [FARC murdered Álvaro Uribe's father in 1983, and plotted to assassinate him for years](#), even [launching a murderous attack on the presidential palace during Uribe's 2002 presidential inauguration that killed 17 people](#). They were determined to shatter democracy in Colombia. Terror and death was a way of life until Uribe was elected, and by the time he left office the FARC had been driven deep into the remote jungles, kidnappings, homicides and terror attacks had fallen dramatically, investors and tourists began

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to return in droves. Colombia's economy began to flourish, and its people could embrace the promise of democracy.

Refusing to give in to terrorists will always exact a price on democratic leaders. Uribe's successor, Juan Manuel Santos, gave up the fight and negotiated a peace deal that allowed the FARC to become a political party and give its leaders immunity from Colombia's criminal justice system, setting up a weakened special court that has whitewashed the FARC's crimes and silenced their victims.

Uribe strongly opposed the peace deal as written, and the Colombian public agreed when they [rejected the deal in a referendum](#) in 2016 and elected Ivan Duque as president in 2018 on a platform to make key modifications that would not abrogate justice. That same year, the FARC [failed to win a single elected seat in Congress](#) from the voters, with only 0.33% of the votes.

A faction of the FARC disavowed the peace deal, and they remain armed and active today, led by two guerrilla leaders who'd been [offered amnesty and unelected Congressional seats](#) but [chose to resume their war against the democratic government](#). One is [Jesus Santrich, who was let go by Colombia's judiciary](#) despite a long list of crimes against the Colombian people. His closest political ally is Senator Ivan Cepeda, the politician leading the unending campaign of political harassment and "lawfare" against Álvaro Uribe.

Known terrorist leaders walk free today in Colombia while Uribe is under arrest.

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FACTS About Uribe's Accusers

All of the accusations against Álvaro Uribe originated from one man — Senator Iván Cepeda, a leftist politician who has been waging a political war against Uribe for decades. His attempts to turn his political attacks into judicial action had repeatedly failed until the Supreme Court of Justice was exposed as a centerpiece of a massive corruption scandal called the “Toga Cartel” and had three chief justices in three years.

Then-Chief Justice José Leonidas Bustos, who had previously shielded Cepeda's ties to the terrorist FARC organization in 2011 by [suppressing evidence](#), was [the ringleader of a massive scheme](#) of selling lighter sentences for cash. [He fled to Canada in 2019 to avoid prosecution](#). Bustos was replaced as chief justice by Judge José Luis Barceló, who had [co-signed the suppression order](#) with Bustos that shielded Cepeda in 2011. Barceló obtained the 2012 complaint by Álvaro Uribe against Cepeda and systematically suppressed all the incriminating evidence presented in order to close it without further consideration

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and launch his own criminal case against Uribe, violating his rights through illegal wiretapping and leaking selective material to the media. Despite the failure to obtain any evidence that Uribe broke the law, and validating a litany of crimes by Cepeda and violations of Uribe's constitutional rights, Barceló ordered Uribe's arrest on August 4, 2020.

Ivan Cepeda and the FARC:

Senator Ivan Cepeda and the FARC have shared a common goal for over a decade: to [reverse the success of Plan Colombia](#) and replace it with a Marxist state. Cepeda's relationship with the FARC, both during the period of active terrorism and after the peace deal of 2016, is public knowledge.

- The Colombian judiciary had mountains of tangible evidence showing FARC terrorist leader Jesus Santrich conspired to traffic 10 tons of cocaine out of Colombia – a blood-soaked business that helped finance the organization's terrorist operations. But [the judges let Santrich walk free](#). Ivan [Cepeda announced his "solidarity" with Santrich](#) – something Cepeda has never offered to the victims of the FARC – and was later [photographed escorting Santrich away](#) from the Attorney General's office in his car.
- Shortly after the courts set Santrich free in 2019, Cepeda's other close FARC ally – the guerrillas' second-in-command, Ivan Marquez, [built a new guerrilla camp in the jungle and announced a call to return to arms and resume the terror war](#) against Colombia's democratic government. He was joined in the announcement by Santrich.
- After Santrich resumed the FARC terror campaign in 2019, Ivan Cepeda said in March 2020 [he did not regret defending the FARC leader](#) and would have no problem keeping a

dialogue with FARC members despite their past histories of rape, massacres and drug trafficking.

- Cepeda's admiration and close relationship with the dictatorial regime next door in Venezuela is public knowledge. He praised Hugo Chavez as the ["the architect of a new order in our continent"](#) and said his legacy would live on "forever and ever."
- Rodrigo Echeverri, alias "Timochenko," then the supreme leader of the Marxist guerilla group, defended Cepeda amidst President Uribe's complaint over Cepeda's abuse of public office and inducing false testimonies. In 2015, Timochenko [tweeted](#) at the Attorney General of Colombia: "Vengeance, retaliation, or retribution fuel confrontation."



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FREE URIBE LAUNCHES: A new resource for news, information and analysis on the baseless case against former President Álvaro Uribe Vélez and his arbitrary arrest

Posted on [August 31, 2020](#)

Today, [Free Uribe](#) has launched with [@FreeUribe](#) on Twitter, as a new informational hub in the campaign for justice for former Colombian President Álvaro Uribe Vélez, currently under arbitrary arrest in his country.

Uribe's case has provoked widespread public outrage in Colombia, as it springs from a decades-long set of politically motivated accusations without any material evidence to support them. His arbitrary arrest on August 4, 2020, has raised serious legal and constitutional questions stemming

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from the increasingly politicized Colombian judiciary, and the illegal and unconstitutional actions taken by the Supreme Court of Justice that have violated basic international standards of due process. The case is also directly linked to a long-standing vendetta by the terrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) against Uribe, who nearly defeated them in a close alliance with the United States under the Plan Colombia initiative, signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 2000. Uribe saved Colombia from the brink of becoming a failed state, and Plan Colombia was a major bipartisan U.S. foreign policy success. The stakes are high.

[Twenty former Latin American heads of state](#), including [Nobel Peace Prize recipient Óscar Arias of Costa Rica](#), along with [Former Spanish Prime Minister José María Aznar](#) and [U.S. Vice President Mike Pence](#), have publicly expressed solidarity with Uribe and demanded he be released from illegal detention to defend himself in Colombia as a free man.

While the FARC and its allies have campaigned for decades to slander former President Uribe for their own ideological and political ends, **Free Uribe** will correct the record, dispel myths and falsehoods with facts, and ensure the truth is represented at a crucial turning point in Colombia's turbulent history. Millions of Colombians at home and around the world are demanding justice for Uribe, and those concerned about the deterioration of the rule of law in Colombia, the widening of judicial corruption in Latin America, and erosion of regional security in the hemisphere deserve to know the complete story.

The facts reveal the enormous stakes of the Uribe case, and why truth and justice must prevail.

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was to throw them in jail, and the U.S. knew it



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FACT: The only "dealings" Uribe had with paramilitaries was to throw them in jail, and the U.S. knew it

Posted on [August 31, 2020](#)

A [news story](#) was published today relying on one sentence in a 2004 U.S. government document, which the news outlet twists to infer the U.S. government believed a falsehood about then-President Álvaro Uribe.

It is important that the facts be clearly understood:

- The news story itself admits **there were no "suspicions" detailed in the 2004 U.S. Defense Department document about any involvement by Uribe in any criminal activity whatsoever related to paramilitaries.**

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- President Álvaro Uribe was a nemesis of paramilitary groups. During his presidency, 35,000 paramilitaries and 18,000 guerrillas were demobilized. **The only “dealings” President Uribe had with paramilitaries was to throw them in jail.**
- **Every action taken at the highest levels of the U.S. government proved** there was never any doubt about President Uribe’s integrity and commitment to human rights and the rule of law:
- **In 2005, Secretary Rumsfeld’s Department of Defense doubled its personnel commitment to the Uribe government. SOUTHCOMM Commander James T. Hill, in 2004 Congressional testimony, [praised Uribe’s commitment to human rights in demobilizing illegal armed groups](#):** “I am confident that President Uribe and the Colombian military have taken respect for human rights to heart, unlike their adversaries, who commit the vast majority of human rights abuses.”
- **In 2009, President George W. Bush presented Uribe with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest U.S. civilian honor, [saying](#):** “President Uribe has reawakened the hopes of his countrymen and shown a model of leadership to a watching world.”
- **In 2010, President Barack Obama’s Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, said [“Uribe, in my view, is a great hero”](#) and that the Colombian military under Uribe’s leadership [has learned valuable lessons in the human rights arena that other Latin American countries could follow.](#)**
- **At his 2010 address to the United Nations, President Obama [singled out Uribe’s “courage”](#)**

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that "[gives life to democratic principles](#)" by his respecting the rule of law and leaving office at the end of his term when other countries were rolling back institutions.

Decades of politically-motivated slander against Álvaro Uribe cannot change the facts.

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Cepeda escorts FARC terrorist Jesus Santrich from jail. Santrich would go into hiding eight months later. Photo credit: [La FM](#)

Senator Iván Cepeda –ally to FARC terrorist fugitive Jesus Santrich – has spent over a decade making baseless, politically motivated accusations against former President Álvaro Uribe of Colombia. Not one shred of material evidence has ever supported his accusations, and he cloaks himself in the prestige of his public office. Cepeda’s ties to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), his groundless accusations, his actions to induce witnesses and obstruct justice all deserve scrutiny.

But Cepeda cries ‘victim’ when the spotlight is on him, [like he did today](#) in a letter to the Supreme Court of Justice in Colombia. He wants to silence Uribe to advance his own political aims, and silence any discussion of his track record.

Here is a sample of Cepeda’s record:

- Senator Iván Cepeda and the FARC have shared a common goal for over a decade: to [reverse the success of Plan Colombia](#) and replace it with a far-left government.
- In 2015, Rodrigo Echeverri, alias “Timochenko,” the then-supreme leader of the terrorist guerilla group, [issued](#) a veiled threat against a

prosecutor investigating Cepeda's illicit inducement of false testimony against Uribe, warning him not to hold Cepeda accountable.

- Cepeda publicly allied with FARC terrorist fugitive Jesus Santrich, a key conspirator in trafficking 10 tons of cocaine to finance terrorist operations in Colombia, and currently [under indictment in the United States](#). When the [weakened Colombian justice system let Santrich walk free](#), [Cepeda announced his "solidarity" with the](#) terrorist leader – something Cepeda has never offered to the victims of the FARC.
- Santrich then escaped to the jungle to a new guerrilla camp in 2019, and [joined in a public call with his terrorist comrades to resume the terrorist war](#) against Colombia's democratic government.
- Ivan Cepeda said in March 2020 [he did not regret defending Santrich](#) and would have no problem keeping a dialogue with FARC members despite their past histories of rape, massacres and drug trafficking.
- Cepeda's admiration and close relationship with the dictatorial regime next door in Venezuela is public knowledge. He praised Hugo Chavez as the ["the architect of a new order in our continent"](#) and said his legacy would live on "forever and ever."

The "case" against Álvaro Uribe is a political sham that violates international standards of due process. The international community deserves to know the truth.

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